

Sponsor Handbook

BEST BUDDIES[®]



MARYLAND

Best Buddies is dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment.

Revised December 2007

Best Buddies Citizens

"A Friend is a Gift You Give Yourself." – Robert Louis Stevenson

Making a Difference

Best Buddies is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment.

Best Buddies began in 1987 when Founder and Chairman Anthony K. Shriver realized the lack of opportunity people with intellectual disabilities had to socialize with others. Anthony knew that students had the energy and commitment to positively transform their communities. His inspiration to bring people with intellectual disabilities together with college volunteers created Best Buddies.

Since our incorporation in 1989, Best Buddies has touched the lives of more than 300,000 volunteers and people with intellectual disabilities in hundreds of communities across the United States, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, England, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, the Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates. Today, Best Buddies offers six programs: Citizens, Colleges, High Schools, Middle Schools, Jobs and e-Buddies.

Vision

Best Buddies envisions a world where people with disabilities are so successfully integrated into our schools, workplaces and communities that our services will no longer be necessary. Until that day, our vision is to educate students in middle school, high school, and college, as well as employers and our communities about the abilities and needs of people with intellectual disabilities.

Best Buddies Citizens

Best Buddies Citizens pairs adult individuals with intellectual disabilities in one-to-one friendships with adult volunteers from their communities. Friends and family are the foundation that help each of us become successful. Without love, support and friends, our lives would be empty; a life people with intellectual disabilities were forced to live not long ago. Today, volunteers are making a difference by sharing their time with a new friend.

Who's Who?

The Buddy is an individual with an intellectual disability who is paired in a one-to-one friendship with a volunteer from the community (Citizen Buddy).

The Citizen Buddy is a volunteer from the community who is paired in a one-to-one friendship with a person with an intellectual disability (Buddy).

The Sponsor is a person who knows the Buddy very well. He or she will be able to answer questions and address any concerns the Citizen Buddy may have about the Buddy. The sponsor is a liaison between the Buddy and the Citizen Buddy.

The Program Manager is a member of the Best Buddies staff who oversees the daily management and development of all aspects of the Best Buddies Citizens program.



How to Sponsor a Buddy

Step One: Application Process

- Complete a Sponsor Information Form as a Sponsor.
- Assist the Buddy you are referring in completing a Membership Application.
- Complete a Sponsor Referral Form.
- Return completed forms to your Program Manager.

Step Two: Meet the Program Manager

Your Program Manager will schedule a time to meet with you and the Buddy you are referring. The purpose of the visit is for Best Buddies to become more familiar with the Buddy. This will enable Best Buddies to make the best match possible.

Step Three: Matching

After the completion of the application and screening process, matches will be made by the Program Manager, pairing individuals with similar interests who live within 10-15 miles of each other. Please be patient while your Program Manager locates a suitable Citizen buddy for the Buddy you are referring. Best Buddies works to make successful matches and takes into consideration age, gender, and interests. This process can take some time depending on the recruitment of Citizen Buddies who would like to volunteer.

Step Three: Introductions

The introduction meeting allows the Citizen Buddy, Buddy and Sponsor to become acquainted with each other and determine if they feel compatible with each other. If the meeting goes well then the match is official. If not, Best Buddies will work to find someone else to match the Buddy with.

This is an important aspect of Best Buddies because it gives the Budd and Citizen Buddy complete control over the matching process. This aspect also gives Best Buddies the best opportunity to create a friendship that will last.

Step Five: It's a Match

How the friendship develops is up to the Buddy Pair. Once matched, Best Buddies lets the participants develop their friendships independently at their own pace, keeping in mind the requirements of the program. As the pairs get to know each other they learn what they enjoy doing together and their friendship will progress like any other.

One-to-One Outings and Group Outings

The Buddy Pairs will spend time together in the community at one-to-one and group outings. The Citizen Buddy should be meeting the Buddy for one-to-one outings every month and there are at least six group outings every year.

Consumer Guidelines

All Consumers referred to Best Buddies Citizens must:

- Have a desire to enter a friendship
- Be able to contribute to a friendship in such a way that both parties will have a positive experience
- Have the ability to give and take in a friendship where he/she can learn socialization skills by being in a Best Buddies friendship as well as teach a volunteer the capabilities of people with development disabilities
- Be age 18 or older
- Not have any severe behavior problems such as violent verbal or physical outbursts
- Not be an active substance user
- Not exhibit characteristics of a major mental illness
- Have a Sponsor (a Sponsor is the contact person whom the volunteer would call in case he/she had any questions about his/her Buddy and who could assist with scheduling, if needed)



Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Question: How does Best Buddies Citizens make the right match?

Answer: The program attempts to match individuals who are of the same gender, have common interests, live close in proximity and are of similar ages.

Question: How often do the Citizen Buddy and the Buddy meet?

Answer: The amount of time spent together will vary according to each individual's schedule. Best Buddies requires meeting at least twice per month and maintaining weekly contact by phone, mail, or e-mail.

Question: How long will it take to be matched with my Buddy?

Answer: The entire process, from start to finish, usually happens within a month. The process may take longer if you are looking to be matched with a specific type of person.

Question: Who is required to pay for expenses?

Answer: The friendship is just like any other. Each person is responsible for paying his/her own share.

Question: What are the participation requirements needed to volunteer for the Best Buddies Citizens Program?

Answer: Anyone over the age of 18 is welcome to be a part of Best Buddies Citizens. We require that you submit a completed application, schedule a home visit with your Program Manager, complete a background check successfully and, most importantly, have an interest in forming a new friendship.

Question: Whom should I contact if I have a question regarding my Buddy?

Answer: Contact your Buddy's Sponsor. They can address any concerns that may arise. They are aware that it is their role to provide guidance for the friendship to be successful.

Question: How does Best Buddies find my Buddy?

Answer: Buddies are referred to us through various sources. These may include parents, caseworkers, job coaches, group home staff members and other Buddies, to name just a few.

Best Buddies Citizens Fact Sheet

Best Buddies Citizens

- A friendship program
- Matches individuals with intellectual disabilities in one-to-one friendships with other individuals from the community
- Volunteers are making a difference by sharing their time with a new friend

Referral Guidelines

Participants referred to Best Buddies must:

- Be able to contribute to a friendship in a way that both parties will have a positive experience
- Have the ability to give and take in a friendship where s/he can learn from socialization skills by being in a Best Buddies Citizen friendship as well as teach a volunteer the capabilities of people with intellectual disabilities.
- Be age 18 or older
- Not have any severe behavior problems such as violent verbal or physical outbursts
- Not have a major mental illness
- Have a desire to enter a friendship

Commitment

We recommend:

- A one year or six month commitment to the friendship
- Seeing each other twice a month
- Maintaining weekly contacts by telephone, mail or e-mail
- Participation in group activities

Benefits

The Buddy Pairs discover wondrous things about each other. By spending time with one another, the lives of both

individuals are greatly enhanced.

Everyone involved is learning to see things from a whole new perspective, thus becoming more understanding, patient and accepting of others within society.

Participation Requirements

Once a potential Citizen Buddy is located, we require that the Sponsor and the consumer:

- Submit a completed Membership Application for the Buddy and a Sponsor Info. Form and a Sponsor Referral Form.
- Schedule a meeting with the Best Buddies Program Manager
- Most importantly, have an interest in forming a new friendship

Matches

The program attempts to match individuals who:

- Are the same gender
- Have common interests
- Live in close proximity
- Have similar ages

Expenses

A Best Buddies friendship is just like any other. Each person is responsible for paying his or her own share of the activity expenses.

Other Best Buddies Programs

Best Buddies Colleges
Best Buddies High Schools
Best Buddies Middle Schools
e-Buddies
Best Buddies Jobs

“The only way to have a friend is to be one.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Best Buddies International Citizens ***SPONSOR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION***



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This is a membership application used solely by Best Buddies International to collect information on our Sponsors participating in Best Buddies and this information will remain strictly confidential. Completing this form entitles you to the full rights and protection of Best Buddies International as a volunteer and the full benefits of all members of the organization. Applications must be given to your Program Manager, or mailed to
Best Buddies Maryland: 3500 Boston Street, MS-47, Suite 210, Baltimore, MD 21224

State:	Office:	Gender: <i>(circle one)</i> Male Female	Date:
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Full Name:	Date of Birth:	# of Years in Best Buddies:
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Home Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Phone: (_____) _____ **E-mail:** _____

Work Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Phone: (_____) _____ **ext.** _____ **Email:** _____

1)	Do you give permission to be filmed or photographed at any Best Buddies activity and understand that any photograph or videotape may be used at the discretion of Best Buddies for publicity purposes?	YES	NO
2)	Have you ever been fired or asked to resign from a paid or volunteer position because of sexual harassment or physical violence?	YES	NO
3)	Are you an insured driver? Insurance Company: _____ Insurance Policy #: _____ Expiration Date: _____	YES	NO
4)	How are you involved with Best Buddies? <i>(circle one)</i>	Sponsor	Citizen Buddy
		Other	

Please check all that apply

In the future, I would like to:

Receive Best Buddies publications (Newsletter, etc)

Receive more information about becoming an e-Buddy.

Receive more information about becoming a Citizen Buddy within my local community.

Other:

Thank you so much for serving as a Sponsor of a Buddy. We look forward to working with you to make their Best Buddies match an incredible success.

Best Buddies International

Best Buddies is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment. By joining Best Buddies International, you become part of a growing movement of people with and without intellectual disabilities dedicated to ensuring everyone has the opportunity to have a friend. Socialization is one of the simplest, but most often underestimated, solutions to the pattern of exclusion that people with developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, have faced for decades.

You will be joining an organization that has over 60,000 volunteers this year and has positively affected more than 350,000 people this year. Best Buddies accomplishes its mission through six unique programs: Best Buddies Middle Schools, Best Buddies High Schools, Best Buddies Colleges, Best Buddies Citizens, Best Buddies Jobs, and e-Buddies®. Best Buddies High Schools, Colleges, and Middle Schools are the foundation of the organization with chapters at more than 1200 chapters in each of the 50 United States, and operates accredited international programs in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, England, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, the Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates. Best Buddies Citizens matches adults with and without intellectual disabilities in California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. Best Buddies Jobs, our supported employment program, helps people with intellectual disabilities find and keep well paying jobs in Miami, Florida; Los Angeles, California; and Boston, Massachusetts. e-Buddies seeks to match individuals with and without intellectual disabilities in online friendships.

We encourage you to learn more about Best Buddies by visiting our website: www.bestbuddies.org, and on behalf of the 350,000 participants in Best Buddies, we thank you for your support.



Participant Consent

In consideration of the benefits and opportunities afforded to me through participation in the Best Buddies organization, the undersigned states as follows:

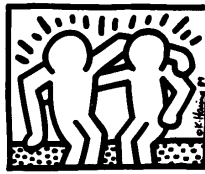
1. I hereby agree to release Best Buddies International, Inc., from any liability for any accident, injury, or illness suffered by me at, during, or in connection with any Best Buddies activities, except for any accident, injury, or illness which results from gross misconduct by Best Buddies International, Inc., or its staff.
2. I authorize Best Buddies International, Inc., to obtain medical treatment for myself in the event of injury or illness in connection with a Best Buddies activity and agree to pay any expense incurred for treatment.
3. I understand that, in connection with any Best Buddies activity, if I am riding in a private passenger automobile which is involved in an accident, he/she may be primarily covered for bodily injury under my family automobile policy, and I agree to submit any medical bills incurred to my insurance company for payment. If my policy has been issued with a deductible clause relative to the personal injury protection, I understand that I have assumed that deductible on primary coverage.
4. If I am being transported in a commercial carrier or other leased or rented vehicles in connection with a Best Buddies activity and an injury occurs, I understand that I shall look to the commercial carrier or owner of the leased or rented vehicle to pay any medical bills incurred as a result of such injury.

NOTE: The undersigned agrees to assume all risk of accident, injury, or illness that may occur at, during, or in connection with any Best Buddies activity.

Signature of Participant

Date

***** Best Buddies is committed to keeping in touch with all of our participants. This information will only be used by Best Buddies in communicating with you in regard to your chapter.**



Best Buddies International Citizens SPONSOR REFERRAL FORM

This form is used in the matching process, so please be as thorough and honest as possible. It should be completed by an individual who knows the potential Buddy well. Please make sure you have reviewed the criteria for participation in Best Buddies before referring a candidate. All information on this form may be shared with the Citizen Buddy matched with this applicant and maybe be used by BBI.

General Information:

Name of person completing this form: _____

Phone Number: _____ Full Name _____ Relationship to applicant _____
Email: _____

Present Address: _____
Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name of Buddy applicant: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Present Address: _____
Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

How long have you known this Buddy? _____ Language(s) spoken? _____

How often are you in contact with this Buddy? Daily Weekly Monthly

Consumer personality: Shy Outgoing Athletic Creative Talkative Other: _____

Consumer interests: Sports Shopping Movies Music Arts/Crafts Other: _____

Consumer Communication Level: Very Verbal Somewhat Verbal Non-Verbal Other: _____

If applicable, has the Buddy's family been notified about the program? Yes No

If no AND applicable, please contact the family ASAP.

Please list below any special needs of which the Citizen Buddy should be made aware:

Behavioral challenges: _____

Hygiene awareness: _____

Physical challenges: _____

Medications: _____

Seizure disorders: _____

Other: _____

Comments: _____

Does s/he require assistance with any activities? Yes No

If yes, please specify the activity and explain the assistance needed:

Why do you recommend this person for Best Buddies?
